MIDDLE EAST AND SOUTH ASIA REVIEW

29 OCTOBER 1981

Reaction to AWACS Decision

Saudi Comment -- SPA reported that the Saudi ambassador to the United States, Shaykh Faysal al-Hegelan, expressed satisfaction with the U.S. Senate's decision approving the sale of AWACS aircraft to Saudi Arabia. He said the decision shows that members of the U.S. Congress fully realize the importance of Saudi-U.S. relations. According to another SPA report, the Riyadh paper AN-NADWAH said the Senate's endorsement of the AWACS deal is a victory for principles and will help counteract the "strategic deficiency" in the balance of military forces between the Arab nation and Israel. AN-NADWAH said that whenever the U.S. Administration considers its real interests in the Arab world it can always free itself from the "bonds of Zionist terror," which had forced the United States into adopting policies that caused Arab hostility toward the United States. AN-NADWAH said Americans can now prevent their future from being controlled by the Zionists, who are busy destroying any occasion for a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. Meanwhile, Kuwait radio reported from Washington that Saudi Air Force Commander Prince Bandar ibn Sultan said the AWACS sale will increase the chances of peace in the Middle East.

Egyptian Comment -- Describing the Senate's approval of the AWACS deal as a victory for President Reagan and a step forward in U.S.-Saudi relations, Cairo radio said the deal is considered to be a sound overture in U.S. policy that could enable other friendly Arab countries and other countries to obtain AWACS aircraft.

Israeli Reaction -- IDF radio broadcast live an Israeli Government statement, read out by Prime Minister Menahem Begin after a special Cabinet session, that expressed regret at the U.S. Senate's decision to approve "the double deal between the United States and Saudi Arabia," which is in a state of war with Israel, which is opposed to the Camp David accords and which finances "terror" in the Middle East. The statement said Israel will do everything to overcome the "new and grave danger" facing it and expressed appreciation for Israel's friends in the United States, asserting that some supporters of the AWACS sale appreciate the status and policy of Israel. The statement also noted that Begin had received a letter from President Reagan promising that the United States will continue to help Israel maintain its military and technological advantages.

Earlier, IDF radio reported that the Israeli Cabinet would now adopt a new line in the wake of the U.S. approval of the AWACS deal and ask the United States for equipment equivalent to the AWACS. The radio said it is assumed Israel "will demand" that the United States take practical steps to reduce the security damage posed by the Saudi AWACS. In interviews with IDF radio, both Communications Minister Mordekhay Tzipori and Labor Party MK Yitzhaq Rabin criticized the Senate decision. Tzipori said there are "very serious problems" between Israel and the United States and added that if as a consequence of the U.S. decision Israel buys arms from the United States which are equivalent to the AWACS, the economic burden on Israel will be unbearable. Israel may have to reconsider its security policy, Tzipori said, and adopt methods other than those used to date. Rabin said the political implications of the AWACS decisions are no less grave than the military implications and asserted that Israel must hold a summit meeting with the United States and Egypt to clarify whether the Camp David accords are still binding on the United States. Denying President Reagan's claim that the AWACS deal is good for peace and good for Israel, Rabin said Israel's problem is with the U.S. Administration, not the U.S. Congress.

In remarks broadcast by the radio, Labor Party Chairman Shim'on Peres said the Senate's decision has adversely affected the balance of power in the region, adding that Saudi Arabia has emerged as "the main country in the Middle East as far as the United States is concerned." Israel does not object to the United States having relations with Arab countries, Peres went on, provided these countries join the peace process.

Sharon on AWACS, Other Issues -- In remarks broadcast by IDF radio, Israeli Defense Minister Ari'el Sharon said the danger to Israel is contained not only in the Saudi AWACS and F-15's but also in "the inclination to give sophisticated weapons to the Arabs." Sharon alleged that the United States is giving arms to the Iraqis indirectly through Jordan and Saudi Arabia. Earlier, Jerusalem radio reported that Sharon claimed that terrorists are now trying to work against Israel via Jordan and Sinai and said Israel will not agree to any violation of the peace agreement with Egypt. Listing other matters on which Israel has a "red line," he said Israel will not permit an Arab country to maintain or produce atomic weapons, will not allow the Iraqis to move forces to Jordan or Syria and will not accept a Syrian invasion of southern Lebanon. There would be war over these things, Sharon added.

Saudi Arabia

DPA reported that Crown Prince Fahd held talks in Bonn with FRG Chancellor Helmut Schmidt and other West German leaders. Noting that Fahd had held extensive talks in Cancun with FRG Vice Chancellor Hans-Dietrich Genscher on the propspects of receiving German arms, DPA also reported that Prince Fahd said he wants Saudi Arabia's relationship with the FRG to remain untroubled even if Bonn makes a "negative decision" on arms sales. DPA reported later that the FRG has consented to the delivery of 18 FH-155-1 heavy howitzers to Saudi Arabia.

Egypt

After meeting with U.S. Ambassador to Egypt Alfred Atherton, Foreign Minister Kamal Hasan 'Ali said the next session of the autonomy talks scheduled for 4 November in Cairo may be postponed until 8 November due to the absence of Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Butrus Ghali, who is abroad. In his remarks reported by Cairo radio, 'Ali also said the peace plan put forward by Saudi Crown Prince Fahd, despite its positive points, is impracticable. Also commenting on the autonomy talks in a Cairo television interview, the text of which was transmitted by MENA, 'Ali replied to a question on the possibility of a summit conference by saying that one might be necessary if the difference in views cannot be effectively bridged. He said that if this happened, bilateral talks would be held first, followed by a tripartite meeting involving the United States.

Libya

Denial on Sudan -- Tripoli radio reported a message sent to Daniel arap Moi, Kenyan president and OAU chairman, by Col Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, affirming that Libya had no intention of attacking Sudan and denying that there were concentrations of Libyan troops on the border with Sudan.

Iran

The 29th October Majlis session was reported by PARS as having approved the nomination of Mir-Hoseyn Musavi as prime minister by a vote of 115 to 39 with 48 abstentions.

YAR

TASS reported President Col 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih's departure from Moscow after his 26 to 28 October visit to the Soviet Union. Among the officials seeing him off at the airport were President Leonid Brezhnev, Foreign Minister Andrey Gromyko and Defense Minister Dmitriy Ustinov. TASS subsequently transmitted a joint communique issued in Moscow on the YAR leader's visit.

FBIS DAILY REPORT

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GANDHI TO VISIT FRANCE, ITALY, BULGARIA IN NOV

BK281247 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 28 Oct 81

[Text] Prime Minister Mrs Gandhi will pay a 4-day official visit to Italy from the 9th of next month at the invitation of Giovanni Spadolini, president of the Italian Council of Ministers. Apart from talks with him on various international and bilateral matters, she will deliver a keynote address at the world food congress of the Food and Agriculture Organization in Rome.

Before going to Italy, Mrs Gandhi will go on a 3-day visit to Bulgaria from the 6th of November. She is also scheduled to visit France during the trip.

AFGHAN REFUGEES IN DELHI SENT BACK TO PAKISTAN

BK281602 Hong Kong AFP in English 1301 GMT 28 Oct 81

[Text] New Delhi, 28 Oct (AFP) -- Twenty of the 41 Afghan nationals who had landed here last week from Pakistan carrying forged passports and fake Indian visas were sent back to Lahore today after their 10-day ordeal at New Delhi's Palam Airport.

Indian immigration sources said that 13 other Afghans had opted to go to Katmandu, the Nepalese capital, after Indian authorities rejected their request for political asylum and refugee status in the country.

The remaining Afghans are still in the airport lounge with the authorities trying to persuade them to either go back to Pakistan or Katmandu.

The Afghans, including three women and one infant, had landed here on October 19 from Lahore. An alert immigration official found that all their passports were forged and the Indian visas faked. Consequently they were not allowed to leave the airport lounge.

Their detention had posed quite a problem for the Indian Government as the Afghans repeatedly refused to board an Indian Airlines plane for their return journey to Pakistan. They called an United Nation High Commission for Refugee (UNHCR) official and pleaded that they should be given refugee status. The Indian Government informally asked the UNHCR to keep away from the issue.

MINISTER WARNS AGAINST EXTREMISTS' ACTIVITIES

BK251603 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 25 Oct 81

[Text] Home Minister Zail Singh has called upon the people to be more vigilant against the activities of a handful of extremists indulging in violence and secessionist slogans. He said not a single political party in the country is extending support to such elements. He was speaking at a function organized in connection with the 18th anniversary of the Bhakhra [dam] dedication day in Nangal this afternoon.

Referring to the tremendous progress made by the country in various fields since independence, he said this had greatly raised the prestige of the country in the eyes of the world. While paying his rich tributes to all those who have contributed to making the country self-reliant, he said it is our duty to maintain and further accelerate its tempo.

All India Radio's Chandigarh correspondent reports from Nangal that it was on this day in 1963 Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru dedicated the Bhakhra dam to the nation and called it a temple of resurgent India.

Earlier, talking to newsmen, the home minister appealed to all political parties and intellectuals to educate the masses about the dangers of the activities of the extremists.

SHAHI INTERVIEWED ON RELATIONS WITH INDIA

BK270727 Karachi Domestic Service in English 1700 GMT 26 Oct 81

[Salim Alvie commentary]

[Text] In an exhaustive interview to a widely circulated Indian journal INDIA TODAY, Pakistan Foreign Minister Agha Shahi has once again reaffirmed Pakistan's keen desire to have cordial relations with neighboring India. He said he would be too glad to travel to New Delhi to achieve that objective.

It is really unfortunate that although India and Pakistan achieved sovereign independence through mutual agreement between the representatives of the two countries 35 years ago, they have not been able to establish a normal friendly and neighborly relationship so far. It is of no use to rake up the past and enumerate the factors which have stood in the way of building up a climate of confidence and mutual trust between them. Both sides can advance equally strong arguments to defend their standpoint. Such a course might generate a good debate, but would hardly help in creating a climate for achieving an understanding which is very necessary for safeguarding the stability and security of South Asia and the Persian Gulf area. If the leaders of the two countries decided to make a start with a clean slate there is no reason why some progress cannot be made toward that end which will be of benefit to the wide multitude that inhabits the subcontinent. It is in this spirit that President Ziaul Haq made an offer of a no-war pact. The offer has now been forwarded to India in black and white.

Elaborating, the Pakistan foreign minister said peace and cordiality with India was now the basis of Pakistan's foreign policy. Although the Simla agreement rules out the use of force between India and Pakistan for settling outstanding issues between them, Pakistan has offered to initiate talks on a nonaggression or no-war pact. He also explained that although Pakistan supported mutual defense arrangements between the Gulf countries, it was opposed to outside involvement. As such it was not in accord with the American thinking over the matter. Similarly, he said while the United States offered military assistance, Pakistan preferred to buy its military requirements, [words indistinct] at 7 percent interest. It was doing so to safeguard the nonaligned status of Pakistan. Pakistan, he added, has also refused to offer any bases to the United States. In other words, Pakistan is trying to seek its security in the context of nonalignment. As such India would be helping the cause of nonalignment by responding to Pakistan's postures.

An understanding between India and Pakistan will not only insure stability and security of the region, but will also be of great benefit to the people of both the countries. India has to rise to the occasion. This (?debate) is the question of only future development [words indistinct]. The India leaders should realize that as a bigger and more resourceful and powerful country, India has to play a vital role in the region. This can be done only if Indian leaders exhibit a large-heartedness and bring about a realistic approach in dealing with regional problems. If they fail today they will be guilty of undermining the security of the region, which will be as harmful to Pakistan as to India itself.

PARS REPORTS MAJLIS APPROVAL OF MUSAVI

LD290828 Tehran PARS in English 0730 GMT 29 Oct 81

[Text] Tehran, 29 Oct (PARS NEWS AGENCY) -- The Islamic Consultative Assembly of the Islamic Republic of Iran this morning gave a vote of inclination to Mir-Hoseyn Musavi as the new prime minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Out of 202 votes, 115 were for, 39 against and 48 abstained.

INTERIOR MINISTER NULLIFIES ESFAHAN BY ELECTION

LD290084 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 28 Oct 81

[Text] According to the Central News Unit, the minister of the interior issued the following announcement in connection with the byelection to the Islamic Consultative Assembly in the Esfahan constituency:

The byelection to the Islamic Consultative Assembly in the Esfahan constituency is considered null and void in accordance with article 49 of the bill on elections to the Islamic Consultative Assembly and on the basis of the honorable Council of Guardians' document No 3889, dated 24 October 1981. A new election for this constituency will be held at the first possible opportunity and with the confirmation of the Council of Guardians.

OIL MINISTER LEAVES FOR GENEVA OPEC SESSION

LD290026 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 28 Oct 81

[Text] According to the Central News Unit, Mohammad Gharazi, minister of petroleum of the Islamic Republic of Iran, left at noon today for Geneva to take part in the extraordinary session of the (?ministers) of the 13 OPEC member countri[illegible]. A delegation composed of officials of the Petroleum Ministry and experts in OPEC issues is accompanying the minister on this journey.

In the OPEC extraordinary session, which will begin tomorrow in Geneva, oil prices and the other OPEC issues will be discussed.

NURBAKHSH: OIL EXPORTS AT 1 MILLION BARRELS/DAY

NC281327 Paris AFP in English 1243 GMT 28 Oct 81

[Text] Tehran, 28 Oct (AFP) -- Iran has exported an average one million barrels of crude oil a day since last March, Central Bank Governor Mohsen Nurbakhsh said today. At the same time, he charged that oil companies were "puttting pressure on some members of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) to slash oil rates.

"They are spreading it around that we are not shipping out oil, or that we are exporting only 500,000 barrels a day. Their aim is to show that our oil revenue is not enough to meet our expenditure," he said.

KHOMEYNI MEETS WITH AMAL DELEGATION, OTHERS

LD281228 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 28 Oct 81

[Text] Hojaj-e Eslam Tavassoli, Golpayegani, Taheri, Rezvani, Jalali Khomeyni, representatives of the imam in the hajj and pilgrimage organization, and Hojjat ol-Eslam Taskhiri were received this morning by Imam Khomeyni, leader of the revolution and founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran, following their return from the pilgrimage to the house of God, and they presented a report to the imam of the nation on their activities during this trip and the revolutionary actions of the Iranian pilgrims.

According to this report, Hojjat ol-Eslam Seyyed Ahmad Haqshenas and Hojjat ol-Eslam Hajj Sheykh Mohammad Hasan (Azizi) and Seyyed Mahmud Hoseyni, the Friday imam of Shahanshahr, also met with the imam of the nation.

Several members of the Amal organization of Lebanon also met and conferred with Imam Khomeyni, leader of the revolution and founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Imam Khomeyni, leader of the revolution and founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran, made a speech at this meeting as follows:

In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. Ever since the earlier struggles the issues of Lebanon and Palestine have been among our main objectives and have not been divorced from Iranian problems. In general, a Muslim should be concerned not only about one group of Muslims. Mr Musa as-Sadr is one of my children. I am very sorry and worried for him; and both in Najaf and in Iran I have made some attempts [to find him], and I hope we will be able to see him in our midst as soon as possible.

As the region is on the verge of a general Islamic movement, America has started to raise certain issues so that it might prevent the defenseless people of the region from determining their own fate. Unfortunately, some governments are also assisting them. The plans of As-Sadat and Fahd are the same. Even if America were to propose a 100-percent Islamic and humane plan we would not believe that it might take a step in the interest of peace and ourselves.

Even if America and Israel were to shout: "There is no god but God" we would not accept it from them, because they wish to deceive us. Those who talk of peace wish to drag the region toward war. Do you expect us to be indifferent to America and Israel and the other superpowers that wish to swallow the region? No, we do not intend to compromise with any of the superpowers and powers. We will not agree to be dominated by America or by the Soviet Union. We are Muslims and wish to live. We want that kind of progress and civilization which would make us reach our hands out to aliens. We want that civilization which is based upon honor and humanity and which would preserve peace upon this basis. The superpowers wish to dominate human beings and the humanity of human beings. We, you and any other Muslim, are dutybound to remain steadfast against them, not to compromise with them and to reject plans such as those of As-Sadat and Fahd. It is our duty to condemn these plans which are not in the interest of the oppressed people.

I assure you that our issues are not divorced from yours; but you know very well that America and its domestic agents have not left us in peace for one moment. So if we have not given you great assistance it is because we are confronted by these criminals. We regard Lebanon as one of us. The Shi'ites of Lebanon and Iran and all the Muslims of the world are one. We hope to maintain our unity.

The issue which I want to draw to your particular attention is that you should discard the notion that it is impossible to confront the big powers. If you want to, you can because God is your supporter. This propaganda which the superpowers have disseminated through their agents to the effect that you cannot continue your existence unless you depend upon one of the two superpowers is 100-percent false. Stand on your own feet and remain firm and steadfast with your God, and try to advance in humanity before any other advancement. Then God will assist us, enabling us to protect our independence, freedom and Islam. I hope you will be successful.

God's peace and blessings be upon you.

MA'ADIKHAH LETTER TO NONALIGNED MINISTERS ON NEWS

LD281010 Tehran PARS in English 0751 GMT 28 Oct 81

[Text] Tehran, 27 Oct (PARS NEWS AGENCY) -- In the wake of recent propaganda attacks on Islamic Republic of Iran, the minister of Islamic guidance, Hojjat ol-Eslam Abdolmajid Ma'adikhah, addressed a letter to the information ministers of the members states of the Non-Aligned Movement in order to expose the specious nature of these attacks.

At the same time Minister Ma'adikhah enclosed a list of terrorist incidents by counter-revolutionaries in Iran generally not known outside of Iran in order to further substantiate the biased nature of news imperialism [as received].

"In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful.

"Your Eminence:

"As you know, the Islamic revolution of Iran has triumphed as a divine revolution by priority to spirituality and attempting to turn man to his God-given identity and origin...

"This revolution, according to its divine essence and on the basis of the guidance of its eternal book, the Koran, has constantly maintained the highest values for mankind to such an extent that it considers killing an innocent man equivalent to killing all the people of the world.

"It is precisely at this point that the roots of the present confrontations and difficulties of this revolution have to be sought in its God-given and humane essence as opposed to the ungodly and inhumane character of its principal enemy, the United States and its allies.

"The greatest danger that imperialism has been faced with as a result of the Islamic revolution is not the fact that it has lost its interests in the Iranian oil resources or has been prevented from destroying industry or agriculture in Iran, or even that its foreign advisers have been expelled, but is rather the fact that the revolution has presented the world with a set of sublime and pure values for liberating mankind from oppression. It is precisely for this reason that imperialism is making every effort to distort and present an unreal image of this revolution and has thus embarked on its most extensive international plots through rumourmongers and the Zionist news agencies, by distorting the news and disseminating falsehoods.

"Recently this plot has focused on distorting the truth about our people's just confrontation with the internal agents of the great Satan, the corrupt and terrorists.

"Compared to the Islamic revolution of Iran, few revolutions in the world have been so benevolent and forgiving towards their enemies....

"In few revolutions have the counterrevolutionaries so ferociously and savagely assassinated innocent people in the streets and public forum, great scholars and representatives of the people. Even infants are not spared from their cruelty. We believe that all this brutality and savagery of the internal and external enemies of this revolution are due to the fact that the contination of this revolution endangers the entire existence of the world's super criminals. Considering the great responsibility that we feel, these actions do not frighten us and, being aware of our enemy's anti-humanitarian nature, we do not expect anything else.

"We are certain that you are not unaware of the fabricated nature of the news and propaganda system of international imperialism under American leadership and the philosophy behind it. Have you taken any steps to expose it?

"Have you thought of any solution to save the oppressed countries from the domination of the Western mass media that attempt to repress the facts about authentic revolutions according to imperialism's whims? In that case inform us as well, so that we may support and accompany you.

"Do you not believe that the Iranian revolution in spite of the greatness of its dimensions has had the lowest number of counterrevolutionaries executed in spite of which it has been the target of the most extensive and, at the same time, the most ugly slanders? The imperialistic mass media had spread the greatest and the most unprecedented propaganda on an international level in the manner of a sympathetic nanny. If this is your belief, what have you done to clarify the truth?

"God Almighty, the oppressed people whose liberation from the most complicated forms of slavery we seek, [word indistinct] future history which is unfolding of an astonishing rate, shall be the witnesses of our actions and the just judges."

URUMIYEH GUARDS REPORT KILLING KDP LEADER

LD281758 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 28 Oct 81

[Text] The Central News Unit correspondnet in Urumiyeh, quoting the Public Relations Office of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps, reports the following:

Yesterday afternoon [as heard] outlawed armed elements attacked the Mahabad headquarters of the Guards Corps, the telecommunications company and the Sepah Bank with RPG-7's, grenade launchers and other weapons, but they were confronted with stiff resistance put up by the revolution guards; leaving behind at least eight dead and some wounded, the attackers were forced to flee. In this clash six brother guards were martyred and four others wounded. The clash, which started at 1330, ended at 2000, but sniper fire continued until 2100.

The Urumiyeh Guards Corps, referring to clashes on the Miando'ab-Bukan axis which took place in the past few days, has announced that in the course of these clashes one of the leaders of the defunct [Kurdish] Democratic Party, Karim 'Ali Faramarzi, was killed.

ANTIREGIME ACTS, OPPRESSION REPORTEDLY INTENSIFY

NC281611 (Clandestine) Free Voice of Iran in Persian to Iran 1500 GMT 28 Oct 81

[Summary] According to our correspondent's report, Khomeyni's regime intends to limit any political marches and demonstrations on the eve and during the month of Moharram to his "infidels" in order to prevent the Iranian freedom fighters from organizing any antiregime marches. With the intensification of its opponents' activities, Khomeyni's Islamic Republic has increased its executions. Khomeyni's Islamic Republic has officially announced that in the street clashes last week 26 revolution guards were killed just in the streets of Tehran.

The Mojahedin-e Khalq are currently under the leadership of Musa Khiyabani. "However, freedom fighters are not exclusively Mojahedin-e Khalq" but consist of "followers of Ayatollah Shari'atmadari, monarchists, military supporting Aryana, (?democrats) supporting Shapur Bakhtiar; and Islamists supporting Bani-Sadr and Admiral Madani." The antiregime front is, in short, a vast front consisting of strugglers from various groups. Various methods, "including the use of wireless, medium-wave transmitters, [word indistinct] (?telephones), and even carrier pigeons," are used by the freedom fighters to contact each other. The strugglers also "have a 5,000-man (?intelligence) network" at their disposal.

Khomeyni's revolution guards continue to use their (?harsh and inhuman) methods to confront opponents. Among these methods is their refusal to give the bodies of executed prisoners to their families. A short time ago 100 mothers, protesting the execution of their children, were arrested. This incident finally broke the silence of Amnesty International which demanded the freedom of the mothers. This warning, however, went unheeded by the Khomeyni regime.

It is said in Tehran that one of the reasons why the bodies of the executed prisoners are not given to the families of the executed is that once bodies are mutilated and "bear signs of torture" and the regime fears "that by seeing the signs of torture on the bodies, the families of the executed will lose control, take to the streets and resort to dangerous activities."

VOICE OF IRAN REPORTS AIR FORCE PILOTS EXECUTED

GF281229 (Clandestine) Voice of Iran in Persian 0330 GMT 28 Oct 81

[Text] Five air force pilots have been executed by firing squad and tens of other armed forces personnel have been imprisoned.

SWEDISH CORRESPONDENT ON TRIP TO BATTLEFRONT

PM281653 Stockholm SVENSKA DAGBLADET in Swedish 24 Oct 81 p 5

[Ulf Hagman dispatch: "Simmering Discontent in Iran's Army"]

[Text] Ahvaz -- In a couple of trenches the flies buzz around the twisted corpses of 10 Iraqi soldiers. After 2 weeks all their features have been colored an unreal yellow-gray by the sand, which never ceases to fly around.

The dead soldiers did not have time to retreat during the Iranian Army's 27-28 September offensive, when an 80-square-km area east of the Karun River between Ahvaz and Abadan was retaken in only 24 hours. They have been presumably left to rot, to be shown as proof of what the Iranian authorities are calling the war's greatest victory.

Another picture of the 13-month war which fell outside the framework of the guided trip to the front: On their way back to Tehran a few hours later, the visiting foreigners are joined by 10 wounded Iranian soldiers aboard an air force Hercules.

One of them, who appears drugged, has lost his left leg below the knee, his left hand, and two fingers from his right hand. He also has a bandage around his head. Another is on an intravenous drip and is being given oxygen; he is breathing heavily, sweating, but is trying to be "brave." A third soldier is frightened, prays to his God several times and wants to hold the nurse's hand.

For them the war is over, and they did not even become "martyrs."

The roads toward Abadan cut straight across a sterile, totally flat steppe landscape. Who wants to sacrifice their life for this wilderness? If it were not for the oil, that is -- now the road is lined withpipelines which have been shot to pieces and broken electricity pylons, metal skeletons which like sick giraffes have taken on the most improbable positions.

The first reports of how the Iraqi 44th Infantry Brigade's Third Division consisting of 10,000-12,000 men was smashed while the Eighth Division succeeded in fleeting from the Karun River were received by many observers with skepticism, since if one were to relieve their reports of victory both sides should have destroyed the enemy's troops and materiel long ago.

In Tehran it was said that the major coordinated operation showed that the armed forces had regained their effectiveness because President and Commander in Chier Bani-Sadr had been swept from the scene.

For the visitors, belief in the effectiveness of the air force decreased at the very beginning of the trip. The first attempt to reach the war zone failed when a Fokker Friendship was forced to turn back halfway to Ahvaz because of bad weather, we were told. The plane's radar was obviously not in the best condition.

On the second day, when the visitors were to board a Hercules 330 at Tehran Airport, it turned out that the air force had lost the key to the aircraft. Fifteen minutes later enterprising soldiers had sawn off the lock.

However, a trip in a jeep a few kilometers into the recaptured area dispelled any possible doubts that the Iranian Army really had carried out a successful offensive.

The Iraqi units had transformed the flat plain into a landscape with contours. From a distance it looked as if giant voles had invaded the area. Everywhere there were abandoned trenches and bunkers, holes and sandbagged defenses for tanks and artillery, and banks of sand and gravel about 2 meters high which stretched for miles. The black and burned wrecks of lorries, tanks, artillery pieces.

Along the Karun River, the Iranian units had now built up a defensive earthwork, but there was no real feeling that a war was going on and that the enemy was on the other side of the river. "Iraq must save both men and ammunition," one officer explained, "so they do not shoot that much, at least not during the day."

Our jeep stirred up gigantic clouds of sand which have been observed from the other side. Quite right: The Iraqis were saving their ammunition.

Despite the obvious progress made, one should be skeptical about the reports of the number of Iraqis killed and the figures for captured tanks and other weapons.

An army colonel told us contemtuously of how the Iraqis lie with their statistics, and gave as an example a battle in which 800 Iraqis had been killed while Baghdad reported that only one had fallen.

After a comment that all sides exaggerate in war, he let slip the hint that "we at least admit to around one-half of our losses."

Around 130 Iranians were said to have fallen in the battle of the Karun River, while Iraqi deaths were said to have been 10 times this number. The guides from the army and the Ministry of Islamic Guidance (information ministry) were very pleased to show us some of the 200 and more tanks and armored vehicles which were said to have been captured.

They were kept in four different places, and we saw a total of 70-80 Soviet-built tanks, of which the most recent model was the T-62, even though it was said that the very modern T-72 had also been captured.

In the oil town of Abadan, which is now a ghost town with empty, cordoned-off streets, a colonel spoke of "the almost miraculous victory," which was a result of "our unity and God's support."

The gray-haired colonel, with the typical crewcut American hairstyle, fought at the front itself and has newly-healed scars from grenade shrapnel over his right arm and the whole of the right side of his body. He received us in the army headquarters, a bank building with stout walls not far from the oil refinery, which has been shot to pieces. He repeats what one is often told: Iraq is receiving help from a long list of countries, while we are fighting on our own.

In fact Iran is receiving a large number of weapons, especially Soviet weapons, via Libya, Syria and Eastern Europe. In addition, the West German G-3 carbine is being produced under license.

The trip did not include the disputed port city of Khorramshahr, whose loss Iran has never admitted. But the only part of the city not in Iraqi hands is the southern outskirts, southeast of the Karun River.

The Iraqi Air Force and artillery attack Ahvaz sporadically. The strategic targets seem unharmed, while dwelling houses and business sections in the center have been destoyed.

During our visit to Khuzestan we are watched closely by the guides, and we have few possibilities of finding out what the people's views are. But when the Iraqis on two occasions took Susangerd city, they were supported by "some fifth columnists," one of whom allowed himself to be appointed mayor. The Iranians say that they executed all of them when they recaptured the city.

Another group whose loyalty to Khomeyni is in dispute is the armed forces' U.S.-trained officers.

Despite many purges, several of them are thought to be dissatisfied with what is happening on the "domestic front," even though the malcontents have as far as is known not had the opportunity to organize themselves.

Iranian officers claim that they would be able to drive the Iraqi Army out of the country quickly, and the question is whether the leaders in Tehran may prefer that war to continue on a back burner so that the officer corps does not have the chance to conspire. The same can be said of Baghdad's view of the war.

A short visit to the front is confirmation of the reports of disagreements between the army's officers and the revolutionary guards, which have become a parallel army of often fanatical youths, loyal to Khomeyni. They have escaped the despair of the poor quarters in the cities and villages and a hopeless future and are now being allowed to fight a war, with all that this entails in terms of excitement and positions of power.

At an artillery unit behind the front line an officer declared that "there are only army soldiers here." It is a well-known fact that at the front there are only pasdaran and 13-14-year-old boy soldiers who belong to the Fed'iyan-e Eslami organization, which is loyal to the regime.

When I asked the officer if they intentionally send the revolutionary guards to the front to be "cannon fodder," he answered with a thunderous laugh. And this is not the only sign of the regular army's contempt for the revolutionary soldiers.

And we heard more than once that when Iraq takes prisoners of war the regular soldiers end up in camps while the revolutionary guards are executed immediately.

The Iranian Army can be expected to carry out new offensives against what is being called a demoralized enemy. A little over a week ago a column of trucks transported at least 20 Chieftain tanks and their crews from the front on the Karun River toward Ahvaz, and possibly further toward Susangerd. West of that city Iraq is occupying a few small towns, and if Iran can recapture these the road to the border is open.

COMMUNIQUE 681 REVIEWS SITUATION AT FRONTS

LD281820 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 28 Oct 81

[Communique 681 of the Joint Staff of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran]

[Text] In His exalted name. The situation on the war fronts during the past 24 hours is brought to your attention as follows: Exchange of fire continued between our forces and those of the enemy on the eastern and western banks of the Karun River. The Islamic army's combatants that are fighting blasphemy, by opening fire on enemy positions, wiped out 12 squad trenches of Saddam's forces, destroyed two ammunition dumps, two vehicles and a number of light- and heavy-weapon emplacements of the aggressors, and killed or wounded 30 of the enemies of Islam.

The Islamic Republic of Iran gendarmerie combatants, by opening fire on the Al-Faw border installations, set ablaze two fuel tanks at the Al-Faw refinery.

In the area west of Dezful, as a result of artillery fire initiated by the Ground Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran, one enemy tank was damaged and two cannons and three ammunition dumps were destroyed.

During the past 24 hours, a violation of our country's airspace in Kano, a border town in the southern part of the country, by six attacking Iraqi aircraft was repulsed thanks to fire initiated by our air defense units. The attacking aircraft vanished from the scene.

Yesterday Saddam's army subjected the cities of Dezful and Ahvaz to a rocket attack and opened fire on Abadan's residential districts using heavy weapons. During these cowardly attacks tens of housing units were destroyed and a number of our dear compatriots were either martyred or wounded.

In operational zones in the western part of the country an exchange of fire continued between the two sides. The (Tang-e Hajian) and Dar Ballut position were subjected to sporadic enemy fire which was then returned by our forces. By opening fire on enemy infantry trenches in the Sar-e Pol-e Zahab region casualties and losses were inflicted on the aggressive enemy servicemen.

On all fronts in Ilam and exchange of fire continued and in Shur-e Shirin and Kane Sakht the intensity of this fire was even greater than elsewhere. Our ground forces's combatants opened fire on active enemy artillery and mortar positions in this region. As a result of these operation which silenced the enemy fire, 5 squad trenches of the aggressors were destroyed and 15 of them were killed. On one of the fronts in this region the combatant gendarmerie personnel, by opening mortar fire, destroyed three enemy group bunkers.

Yesterday five Iraqi soldiers, by giving themselves up to the forces of Islam in the Marivan region, requested asylum.

On 26 October a total of 26 of the epic-making combatants of the ground forces, one of the combatants from the navy and another hero of the Islamic Republic of Iran Gendarmerie attained the glorious rank of martyrdom on the country's southern and western fronts. May their souls be happy!

IRAQI DIVISION COMMANDER, SOLDIERS KILLED

LD290124 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 28 Oct 81

[Text] The Central News Unit, quoting the Public Relations Office of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps, has reported the following:

The commander of the Iraqi 8th Division, together with a staff colonel who was the commander of an Iraqi brigade, two officers and 30 Iraqi soldiers, were trapped and killed a few days ago while inspecting the Haji 'Emran garrison by Kurdish Muslim brothers.

Meanwhile, the Central News Unit, quoting informed military sources in Iraq, has reported that six Iraqi soldiers and NCO's who had begun to oppose the fascist Ba'th government in the Sayy'd Sadiq garrison in Iraq, on 23 October of this year were arrested by the security forces of the antihuman regime of Saddam and were imprisoned. This action by the Iraqi soldiers followed a demonstration staged by the people of As-Sulaymaniyah in Iraq. The clashes between the police and the demonstrators in this city led to the injury of several of the inhabitants of As-Sulaymaniyah.

NEPAL

EMBASSY IN IRAN CLOSED FOR ECONOMIC REASONS

BK271544 Katmandu External Service in English 1450 GMT 27 Oct 81

[Text] His majesty's government has decided to close down the embassy in Tehran effective from 5 October 1981, it was announced in Katmandu today. Stating that a decision has been arrived at as part of the austerity measure, a press statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said that the step was guided purely by economic considerations and was not in anyway [word indistinct] friendly relations existing between the two countries.

It may be recalled that Nepal had opened a residential mission in Tehran in 1975 at the level of charge d'affaires. The royal Nepalese ambassador in Pakistan, who is concurrently accredited to Iran, will continue to look after Nepal's relations with Iran.

The Government of Iran, which was consulted on the matter, has shown full understanding to the decision of his majesty's government.

PRIME MINISTER THAPA RETURNS FROM INDIA 27 OCT

BK271541 Katmandu External Service in English 1450 GMT 27 Oct 81

[Excerpt] Prime Minister Surya Bahadur Thapa returned to the capital this morning after undergoing a treatment to his eye by doctor [name indistinct] of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences in New Delhi, India.

SRI LANKA

POLICE FEAR RECURRENCE OF COMMUNAL VIOLENCE

BK261539 Hong Kong AFP in English 0625 GMT 26 Oct 81

[Text] Colombo, 26 Oct (AFP) -- Sri Lankan police who had been engaged in protecting Britain's Queen Elizabeth during the past 5 days today turned their attention to prevent a recurrence of communal violence.

Police fear that lawless elements who had called a voluntary truce during the 5-day state visit of the British monarch which ended yesterday might now unleash another wave of communal violence.

The inspector general of police, Ana Seneviratne, has sent instructions to police throughout the country to act firmly and swiftly against persons who incite communal unrest between the majority Sinhalese and the minority Tamils. The police chief's directions follow the appearance of a rash of posters inciting communal passions and threatening violence against the minority community. Mr Seneviratne has drawn the attention of his men to emergency laws which provide for swift action against lawbreakers.

A state of emergency declared on August 17 to deal with an outbreak of communal violence was extended 10 days ago for a further month. Hardly a few hours after Parliament approved the extension of the emergency last week a gang of armed men robbed a bank and shot dead a soldier and seriously injured another in Kilinochchi in the Jaffna district. One week earlier two soldiers had been killed in the Jaffna District.

All three killings are believed by police to be the work of a gang of terrorists who are backing the demand for a separate state for the minority Tamils.

The Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF), which is demanding a separate state for the Tamils who comprise 11.4 per cent of the near 15 million population, has however condemned the violence and the killings of the three soldiers. In a statement it said, "such acts of violence do not in any way advance the political objective of the Tamils."

Police feared that some extreme elements might try to take revenge for these killings, sparking off another wave of communal violence.

A group of representatives of the Tamil community yesterday called on the army commander, Major General Tissa Weeratunge, and handed him a cheque for rupees 32,000 as an initial contribution to the families of the three soldiers who were slain. Observers said that this gesture might help to defuse some of the tension generated by the deaths of the soldiers.

Meanwhile the security authorities have sought the assistance of the public for information about the assailants for whom a countrywide manhunt has been launched.

BRIEFS

JAPANESE LOAN -- Japan will extend $58.6 million in commodity credit and loan to Sri Lanka. The loan is payable over 30 years including a 10-year grace period with an interest rate of 2.75 percent [Colombo SUN in English 19 Oct 81 BK]

ADB ASSISTANCE -- The Asian Development Bank will provide assistance of R188 million based on a proposal prepared by the FAO Investment Center to aid Sri Lanka's forestry program. [Colombo SUN in English 19 Oct 81 BK]